

The Honorable Jed S. Rakoff
U.S. District Court Judge
Southern District of New York
Daniel Patrick Moynihan U.S. Courthouse
500 Pearl Street
New York, New York 10007-1312

Re: Sentencing of Stefan Lumiere

7 May, 2017

Dear Judge Rakoff:

I have to confess: I am at a total loss for words. My family thought it would be easy for me to dash off a letter like this. After all, I was an editor at *Marie Claire*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *Parenting* magazines. I've written for publications ranging from *Glamour* to *United Press International*. I have an M.S.J. from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and a B.A. in history from Barnard College. I've been a curator and moderator at the French Institute Alliance Française in New York for the last 4 years, where I've organized panel discussions ranging from "Dating in the Digital Age" to "How to Talk to Your Kids about Sex." I'm used to broaching difficult and uncomfortable subjects. And yet still, this is the hardest letter I've ever had to write. So please bear with me, as the words don't come easily.

My name is Erica. I am Stefan Lumiere's big sister. Or rather, he is my little brother, which is how I prefer to think of him. I'm probably way too old to still care about things like who was born first, but having a brother only a year behind me in school did matter for many years. At boarding school, we shared many of the same friends. And after getting our college and graduate degrees, we again travelled in the same social circles. It was easy to do so, especially since we chose to share a small apartment in NYC to save money early on in our respective careers. (I took the bedroom, and Stefan the living room.)

Living with your brother for much of your 20s might seem strange to some people, but I couldn't have asked for a better roommate. Yes, it was an experience, but one which I will never forget. It gave me a unique perspective into what kind of person Stefan really is. For instance, my brother is a happy-go-lucky, easy-going guy. He almost never complains, and nothing seems to bother him. As a roommate, he was very respectful of my time, space, and sleep schedule. He knew how important it was for me as an editor to have some quiet time in our apartment to collect my thoughts when I brought work home, and he took great care not to disturb me. He also was very considerate and always picked up after himself.

Stefan is also incredibly funny. I remember once being home alone watching *Lifetime Television for Women*. It was the night of the Super Bowl, and Stefan walked in from the gym and asked to switch channels. I was deeply engrossed in the movie and didn't pay him any mind. Stefan just shrugged and said he'd call a friend and go watch the game someplace else. He showered and changed, and came back into the living room to say goodbye. He sat down for a few minutes to gather his things, and before we knew it, he was watching my mindless movie as well. An hour went by, and he got a call from his buddies asking where he was. He just laughed at himself that he was probably one of the only men in America who was happily watching *Lifetime* on the night of the Super Bowl. (He never did make it out, and we still laugh about this incident today.)

I could tell you a thousand stories about Stefan, but here's one that I think best illustrates what a nice and thoughtful person he is.

It was Stefan's 20th high school reunion at our boarding school in Kent, CT. Stefan didn't want to go alone, so I happily accompanied him hoping to catch up with the many friends we once had in common.

At the time, I was already married and had two young children, and Stefan was single. (He was still reeling from an earlier engagement to a woman whom he'd loved dearly, which sadly had been called off.) We arrived at the reunion, only to find that only two other couples from his year had shown up for the dinner. One was a very good friend who by then had become very successful and had a glamorous wife. To protect his privacy, let's just call him Billy.

Billy had arrived by helicopter and wasn't happy with the turnout. The only other couple at our table was an old classmate (whom we all couldn't remember) and his young wife. Let's call him Steve. Steve had come a long way for the reunion and was very nice. Stefan and I could clearly see how proud he was to show his wife his old stomping grounds. Anyway, after we'd all had a drink at the table, Billy leaned over to Stefan to whisper that he thought we should "blow this joint." He'd already secured us a last-minute dinner reservation for four in town instead.

It was clear that Billy wasn't inviting Steve and his wife along, and Stefan was horrified at the thought of excluding the couple. He kept telling Billy that it wouldn't be right for us to take off and leave Steve and his wife alone at the reunion dinner. Stefan kept saying, "We can't humiliate Steve like this, especially in front of his wife. Imagine how he's going to feel?" Billy didn't seem to care and ran off with his wife to make the reservation. In his mind, Steve was a nobody whom he couldn't remember and would probably never see again. Stefan and I stayed and had a very enjoyable evening getting to know Steve and his wife. We haven't seen them since, but I will always remember that night and how proud I was to have such a kind and considerate brother.

I hope the court will show Stefan the same sort of compassion on the day of his sentencing and will be as lenient as possible. My brother is really a nice person, in more ways than I could ever possibly describe in such a short letter. Please give him another chance to do more good things with his life.

Respectfully,



Erica Lumiere

[REDACTED]
New York, NY
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